

I'TIKAF* DURING THE LAST TEN DAYS OF *RAMADAN

APRIL 14, 2023 | 23 RAMADAN 1444H

أَلْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ نَحْمَدُهُ وَنَسْتَعِينُهُ وَنَسْتَغْفِرُهُ. وَنَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنْ شُرُورِ أَنْفُسِنَا وَمِنْ سَيِّئَاتِ
أَعْمَالِنَا. مَنْ يَهْدِهِ اللَّهُ فَلَا مُضِلَّ لَهُ وَمَنْ يُضِلِّ فَلَا هَادِيَ لَهُ.

وَأَشْهَدُ أَنْ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَحْدَهُ لَا شَرِيكَ لَهُ، وَأَشْهَدُ أَنَّ سَيِّدَنَا مُحَمَّدًا عَبْدَهُ
وَرَسُولَهُ.

اللَّهُمَّ صَلِّ وَسَلِّمْ عَلَى سَيِّدِنَا مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلَى آلِهِ وَأَصْحَابِهِ أَجْمَعِينَ.
أَمَّا بَعْدُ،

فِيَا عِبَادَ اللَّهِ، اتَّقُوا اللَّهَ وَأُوصِيكُمْ وَإِيَّايَ بِتَقْوَى اللَّهِ، فَقَدْ فَازَ الْمُتَّقُونَ.

Let us all increase our devotion towards Allah the Almighty by performing all that He has decreed and abstaining from all that He has prohibited. Hopefully, we will be blessed in this world and in the Hereafter.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Allah the Almighty multiplies the rewards in the month of *Ramadan*, especially in the last ten days. The Prophet (peace be upon him [PBUH]) himself increased worship and righteous deeds such as *sunnah* (nonobligatory) prayers, recitation of the Quran, *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah), *du'a* (supplication), almsgiving and *I'tikaf* (devotional retreat in the mosque). Allah the Almighty said in the Quran in Chapter 2 (*Surah Al-Baqarah*), verse (*ayat*) 187:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

وَلَا تُبَشِّرُوهُمْ وَأَنْتُمْ عَاكِفُونَ فِي الْمَسْجِدِ تِلْكَ حُدُودُ اللَّهِ فَلَا تَقْرَبُوهَا كَذَلِكَ

يُبَيِّنُ اللَّهُ آيَاتِهِ لِلنَّاسِ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٧٧﴾

Which means: “...Then fast until nightfall. Do not lie with them during the nights of your devotional retreat in the mosques: these are the bounds set by Allah, so do not go near them. In this way Allah makes His signs clear to people, that they may guard themselves against doing wrong.”

Among the acts of worship that the Prophet (PBUH) took very seriously in the last ten days of *Ramadan* was the act of *I'tikaf*. The practice of *I'tikaf* starts on the night of the 21st of *Ramadan*, before *Maghrib* (dusk) and ends on the night of *Eid Al-Fitr* (the celebration at the end of the fasting month). It is recommended to end *I'tikaf* with the *Eid Al-Fitr sunnah* prayer. It is done earnestly with more *mujahadah* (striving) than other days in the month of *Ramadan*. The Prophet (PBUH) said in a *hadith* narrated by Imam Muslim:

كَانَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ -صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ- يَجْتَهِدُ فِي الْعَشْرِ الْأَوَاخِرِ مَا

لَا يَجْتَهِدُ فِي غَيْرِهِ

Which means: “Allah’s Messenger (PBUH) used to exert himself in devotion during the last ten nights to a greater extent than at any other time.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Many Muslims believe that the *I'tikaf* of *Ramadan* is simply to come to the mosque for a moment either at night or during the day, while the *I'tikaf* that was practiced by the Messenger of Allah the Almighty (PBUH) was throughout the last 10 days of *Ramadan* without leaving the mosque, except for emergency situations. It was practiced by the Prophet (PBUH) continuously until his death and was continued by his wives. In fact, the Prophet (PBUH) performed *I'tikaf* for twenty days in the last year before his death as stated in the *hadith* which was narrated by Aishah (the Prophet's wife -may Allah be pleased with her) and reported by Imam al-Bukhari and Muslim:

Which means: *“The Prophet used to practice I'tikaf in the last ten days of Ramadan but the year before his death he did it for 20 days and then his wives continued the practice of I'tikaf.”*

Therefore, let us try our best to follow the *sunnah* of the Messenger of Allah by doing *I'tikaf* in the last ten days of *Ramadan*. This kind of *I'tikaf* should be revived because this practice was done by the Prophet (PBUH) every year.

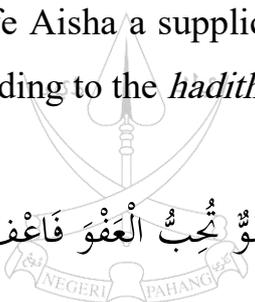
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of the wisdoms of *I'tikaf* in the mosque is it allows us to practice *uzlah* (seclude ourselves) for a while from the hustle and bustle of the world. We can spend our time pondering upon the greatness and magnificence of Allah the Almighty as well as reflecting on ourselves. Our free time during *I'tikaf* in the mosque can be used to recite the Quran, perform *tadarus* (reciting the Quran in a group) and practice *tadabbur* (contemplating the meaning of the Quran).

We should also utilize the time to perform *sunnah* prayers such as *tahajud*, *tawbah*, *tasbih* and other prayers calmly and solemnly without any distractions. These are the benefits of *I'tikaf* in building a spiritual relationship with Allah the Almighty.

The time during *I'tikaf* can also be filled with *dhikr* and supplications that can purify the soul. *Dhikr* is food for the soul that strengthens faith and the relationship and love with Allah that cannot be felt and enjoyed except by those who experience it themselves.

May our focus and effort in worshiping in the last ten days of *Ramadan* allow us to achieve the blessings of *Lailatul Qadr* (The Night of Power). The Prophet (PBUH) taught his wife Aisha a supplication that should be recited on the night of *Lailatul Qadr* according to the *hadith* of Imam al-Tirmizi:



اللَّهُمَّ إِنَّكَ عَفُوفٌ تُحِبُّ الْعَفْوَ فَاعْفُ عَنِّي

Which means: “O Allah, You are Most Forgiving, and You love forgiveness; so forgive me.”

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Let us together enliven the last ten days of *Ramadan* and *Lailatul Qadr* with worship and practices that bring us closer to Allah the Almighty. Hopefully with our worship, we will be forgiven for our past sins and enter Paradise. Allah the Almighty said in the Quran in Chapter 2 (Surah Al-Baqarah) verse (*ayat*) 21:

أَعُوذُ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ الشَّيْطَانِ الرَّجِيمِ

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ أَعْبُدُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ وَالَّذِينَ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَتَّقُونَ ﴿١٦١﴾

Which means: “People, worship your Lord, who created you and those before you, so that you may be mindful [of Him]”

بَارَكَ اللَّهُ لِي وَلَكُمْ فِي الْقُرْآنِ الْعَظِيمِ، وَنَفَعَنِي وَإِيَّاكُمْ بِمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْآيَاتِ وَالذِّكْرِ
الْحَكِيمِ، وَتَقَبَّلَ مِنِّي وَمِنْكُمْ تِلَاوَتَهُ إِنَّهُ هُوَ السَّمِيعُ الْعَلِيمُ، أَقُولُ قَوْلِي هَذَا
وَأَسْتَغْفِرُ اللَّهَ الْعَظِيمَ لِي وَلَكُمْ، وَلِسَائِرِ الْمُسْلِمِينَ وَالْمُسْلِمَاتِ، وَالْمُؤْمِنِينَ
وَالْمُؤْمِنَاتِ، فَاسْتَغْفِرُوهُ فَيَا فَوْزَ الْمُسْتَغْفِرِينَ وَبَا نَجَاةَ التَّائِبِينَ.

